

REMARKS

This Application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action mailed February 21, 2008. At the time of the Office Action, Claims 1, 4, 11-15, and 21-33 were pending in this Application. Claims 21-33 were rejected. Claim 12 was objected to. Claims 1, 4, 11, and 13-15 were allowed. Claim 12 has been amended. Claims 21-33 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Applicants reserve the right to prosecute these claims at a later date. Claims 2-3 and 5-10 were previously cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer and Claims 16-20 were previously cancelled due to an election/restriction requirement. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and favorable action in this case.

Claim Objections

The Examiner objected to Claims 12 and 26 because of the following informalities: In Claim 12 “the connector” lacks antecedent basis. In Claim 26, line 3, “the housing” should be “the tubular housing” and line 5, “the housing” should be “the lateral U-shaped housing.” Applicants have amended Claim 12 as requested by the Examiner. Applicants believe that Claim 12 is now in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested. Claim 26 has been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants appreciate the Examiner’s allowance of Claims 1, 4, 11, and 13-15.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103

In order to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness, the references cited by the Examiner must disclose all claimed limitations. *In re Royka*, 490 F.2d 981, 180 U.S.P.Q. 580 (C.C.P.A. 1974). Further, the references may be combined if one of ordinary skill in the art would have combined the elements as claimed by known methods such that in the combination each element would perform the same function as it did separately. Further, the results of the combination must be predictable. (Fed. Reg. Vol. 72, No. 195, pp. 57526-35,

October 10, 2007, Examination Guidelines for Determining Obviousness under 35 U.S.C. §103 in View of the Supreme Court Decision in KSR International Co. v. Teleflex Inc.).

Claims 21-24, 28, and 30-31 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 5,387,187 issued to Claude Fell et al. ("Fell") in view of U.S. Patent 4,824,339 issued to Marlene A. Bainbridge et al. ("Bainbridge"). Applicants respectfully traverse and submit the cited art combinations, even if proper, which Applicants do not concede, does not render the claimed embodiment of the invention obvious. However, in the interest of progressing prosecution, Claims 21-24, 28, and 30-31 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Applicants reserve the right to prosecute said claims in other continuation applications.

Claims 25-27 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Fell in view of Bainbridge, and further in view of U.S. Patent 5,309,604 issued to C. Eric Poulson ("Poulson"). Applicants respectfully traverse and submit the cited art combinations, even if proper, which Applicants do not concede, does not render the claimed embodiment of the invention obvious. However, in the interest of progressing prosecution, Claims 25-27 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Applicants reserve the right to prosecute said claims in other continuation applications.

Claim 29 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Fell in view of Bainbridge, and further in view of U.S. Patent 4,558,996 issued to Harold D. Becker ("Becker"). Applicants respectfully traverse and submit the cited art combinations, even if proper, which Applicants do not concede, does not render the claimed embodiment of the invention obvious. However, in the interest of progressing prosecution, Claim 29 has been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Applicants reserve the right to prosecute said claim in other continuation applications.

Claim 32 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Fell in view of Bainbridge, and further in view of U.S. Patent 5,215,450 issued to Yebuda Tamari ("Tamari"). Applicants respectfully traverse and submit the cited art combinations, even if proper, which Applicants do not concede, does not render the claimed embodiment of the invention obvious. However, in the interest of progressing prosecution, Claim 32 has been

cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Applicants reserve the right to prosecute said claim in other continuation applications.

Claim 33 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Fell in view of Bainbridge, and further in view of U.S. Patent 6,113,554 issued to Roland O. Gilcher et al. ("Gilcher"). Applicants respectfully traverse and submit the cited art combinations, even if proper, which Applicants do not concede, does not render the claimed embodiment of the invention obvious. However, in the interest of progressing prosecution, Claim 33 has been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Applicants reserve the right to prosecute said claim in other continuation applications.

ATTORNEY DOCKET
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PATENT APPLICATION
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PETITION FOR EXTENSION OF TIME

Applicant encloses a Petition for Extension of Time for three months and authorizes the Commissioner to charge the amount of \$1,050.00 to Deposit Account No. 50-2148 of Baker Botts L.L.P.

CONCLUSION

Applicants have now made an earnest effort to place this case in condition for allowance in light of the amendments and remarks set forth above. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of Claim 12 as amended.

Applicant believes no additional fees are due, however the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees necessary or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-2148 of Baker Botts L.L.P in order to effectuate this filing.

If there are any matters concerning this Application that may be cleared up in a telephone conversation, please contact Applicants' attorney at 512.322.2580.

Respectfully submitted,
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Date: 7/17/08

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